

A  
PRESENT  
FOR  
SERVANTS,

From their

*Ministers, Masters,*

OR

Other Friends,

Especially in Country Parishes.

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1 Cor. vii. 24.

*Brethren, let every man, wherein he is  
called, therein abide with God.*

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T O

All Masters of Families in the  
Parish of *Great Kimbel*, in  
the County of *Bucks*.

*Grace, Mercy, and Peace, from  
God our Father, and the Lord  
Jesus Christ.*

Dearly Beloved,

**H**AVING design'd to write some-  
thing for the use of your Ser-  
vants, I could not do better than  
to put the little Book into your Hands,  
to whom God has committed the Charge  
of them; and I have herein the high-  
est Example, even of God himself,  
who gives first his Commands to Ma-  
sters of Families, to be by them handed  
down to all in their Houses: as, for

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instance, in the great Commandment about the Sabbath, he does not speak to Servants immediately, but makes their Masters the trustees of his Will, saying, thou shalt do no manner of work, neither thou --- nor thy Man-Servant, nor thy Maid-Servant, implying that they must cause them to observe the Commandment; and indeed for this cause were Families, as well as all other lawful Societies, ordain'd, that the Salvation, even of the lowest members thereof, may be the better furthered under the Government therein. But alas, how little do men think, when they take on them the Government of Families, that God has committed to them a Charge of Souls? if they did, how durst they take a Charge that they are not able to perform, by reason of their Ignorance, or never mind, by reason of their willfulness? if you did believe, that every Servant you take into your House, will add to the dreadfulnes of your account, if he perisheth through  
your



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your fault and negligence, could you then be so indifferent in your choice of them, as too many be? I remember, David saith, His eyes were upon the faithful in the land, that they might serve him, *Psal.* 101. 6. but we have Masters that chuse Servants as they do their Horses, if they be strong and able for their work, they mind no more, though you would not bring in a scabbed Sheep into your Flock: yet are there not that bring in drunken, swearing Servants, with the plague of prophaneness upon them into their Houses, and lay the infected Wretches with their dear Children and other Servants? Can you as easily perform your duty towards obstinate stubborn Servants, as towards those which are good, or at least pliable and willing to be instructed and admonished? Is not so great a Blessing or Curse, as a good or bad Servant will prove to your Family, enough to make you pour out one Prayer for God to direct you in the choice? It is hard that you cannot en-

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quire into the Education that they have formerly had, or at least into their present inclinations to good or evil. Do not lightly take into your Families a Companion of Fools, whose customs and habits of sin have been visible in their former Conversations, unless you have good evidence or ground for hope of their reformation. But the misery again of it is, when Masters are as bad as the Servants: He cannot enquire after the Godly disposition of Servants, that is about to bring them into a cold Prayerless Family; nor can He ask them whether they are willing to be instructed, who is himself so ignorant that He cannot, or so careless that He never intends to instruct them. But I am perswaded better things of some of you, and things that accompany Salvation. And He that is devoted to God himself will engage for his Family too, as Joshua, Ch. 24. 15. As for me and my house, I will serve the Lord. God himself gives testimony of Abraham, I know him that

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that He will command his --- Household after him. *Christian Families are frequently called Churches for the worship of God perform'd therein. Every Master is a Priest in his own Family, and I have often thought his obligation to teach and govern his Servants, is much greater than that of a Minister to any particular Family in his Charge. You have an opportunity to know their tempers and temptations, that we have not, and by your nearness to them, can take every Servant by himself, and deal with him as his case requires: by your constant continuance with them: and having the power of rewards and punishments in your hands, you may more easily perform your duty towards them, if you have hearts to it. I know you are counted Good Masters in the places where you dwell; and I cannot say the contrary as to outward things, for ought I know, the most of you (if not all) give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, in necessary provision, both in health and sickness,*

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in faithful discharge of your Contracts  
in their Wages or Salary, in prudent  
ordering of their work and business.  
And it is not the hard labour of Ser-  
vants that I pity them for, so that they  
are not unnecessarily expos'd to cold  
or wet, that may endanger their health;  
or so tyred with the World as to be un-  
fit for Family, or secret Prayer, or  
other duties. For indeed, it is for the  
Servants Souls that I am pleading  
with you. There is not any poor Boy  
or Girl that you keep, but has a Soul  
as pretious as Lords and Ladies, and cost  
as dear a price. What have you done for  
the Souls of them that are under your  
Roof? Let Conscience speak, if you  
should give your Servants no meat  
and drink, all the Country would cry  
shame on you; but is it not a worse  
shame and greater Cruelty to starve  
their Souls? Do you keep Servants  
with rational Souls, only like your Hor-  
ses, to eat, and to drink, and to work?  
If any of you are not able to instruct  
them, be deeply humbled presently, and  
get

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get others to instruct them. Ought you not to have required their attendances on publick Catechizing, and their submission thereunto? I am sure the Church lays no less a penalty than Excommunication upon you if you refuse; and is not your instructing them the way to increase in knowledge your selves? What if the poor ignorant Servants, that you made part of your Household, should follow you from place to place, from House to Field, and cry after you to instruct them? What if they should tell you with many tears, that they are likely to die without knowledge, and that they are convinced, that Christ is coming in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God—— Would you not instruct them? And if you say, but my Servants have no such sense, no such desire: Why then, are they not the more miserable? Have they not the greater need? And does not their case cry as loud for pity, as their voice can do? Have you no bowels of compassion,

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on perishing Souls? If not, at least have pity on your own, and let not their blood be on your heads. Family-Duties, and Instruction (if carefully minded) would have prevented much of that disorder that is in almost all Parishes, which now is not so easily cur'd; but it requires all your care and diligence to restrain that wickedness, which ignorance has caus'd. What saith the Law? Deut. 22. 8. When thou buildest a new house, thou shalt make a Battlement upon the roof, that thou bring not blood upon thy house, if any fall from thence. Family-Duties, Prayer, Reading, singing Psalms, repetition of Sermons, Catechizing of Servants, &c. are like so many Fences, or Battlements on one side; Commands, Reproofs, Corrections, and Restraints from sin, are Rayls, or Battlements on the other; and if you set not these Battlements on your Roof, woe be to you, if any fall from thence; and if you say, I do not push them down, I do not force them, or require them

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them to take such courses, I would not have them fall. Nay, but this is not enough, you must set Battlements, to prevent their ruining themselves: If you say further, but if I do set Battlements, they may climb over them, and do what I can, will run on to their destruction; why then, their blood will be on their own heads, and you have delivered your house from the guilt thereof. By all this you may see to how little purpose your complaint of wicked Servants has been. When your own Purse is touch'd by unfaithful Servants, you feel it: You might have known it before, when you saw how averse they were to knowledge, &c. that they that were not faithful to God, were not like to be faithful to you; that if you suffer'd them to haunt evil Company, and break the Sabbath, and to live in riotous Courses; that these Extravagancies would call for Money, and where should they have it but by defrauding you: And if your grief be indeed for the sin of your Servants against

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gainst God, I beseech you look inward; it may be, your selves were Servants once, and you liv'd in carelessness towards God, and unfaithfulness toward your Masters, and now God is visting your sin upon you: And what comfort can you hope for in your Families, till that guilt be remov'd? And if you are in earnest, why are you as indifferent about the Servants you chuse, since you have had this experience of their wickedness, as you were before? Nay, why after trial of their obstinacy, do you not rid your hands of them? You know David's resolution, Psal. 101. 7. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell in my house, he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. But if any keep a debauched person, a Drunkard, prophane Swearer, obstinate against God, and Goodness, for a second Year, because it may be, he is strong and able to do his work, I note that Man (as there are noted Families in the Apostles sense, 2 Thes. 3. 14.) and assuredly your sin will find



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find you out. But if you will be zealous for God, and against sin in your Families, how much may some of you do towards the promoting Religion in the Countrey, and what a Colony of young persons may from time to time go out of your houses, to bear up the Name of Christ in the places where they dwell? What a blessing of the Lord will be within your Tabernacle? What comfort in your Relations? What joy in Afflictions, and even Death it self? Your House shall be built by Wisdom, and established by Understanding, Prov. 24. 3. that this little Book may something promote this main design of Family-Godliness, is the Prayer of

Your Unworthy Minister,

and Servant for Jesus Christ,

*Richard Mayo.*

THE

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( I )

# PRESENT

FOR

# SERVANTS.

## CHAP. I.

*Of the Kinds of Servants, and of the  
lawfulness of the Servants Calling.*

**T**HERE is scarce any general Name of a *Calling*, that contains under it, such different kinds of Persons, as this of a *Servant*. Some *Service* being so high and honourable, that there is no Subject so great, but that glo-

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ries in being Entitled the King's *Servant*, in the various Offices of his Household ; and some Service is so vile and miserable, that the poorest Person in a Free Land is happy in being delivered from it. There are three sorts of Servants that I shall name, tho' it be only for the last of them that I have intended this Discourse.

1. There are *Servants of State*, that make up the Retinue of Great Men and Nobles, who living in Ease, Pleasure, and Worldly Delicacies, have no agreement with those that I am concern'd with, save in the bare Name.

2. There are *Slaves and Vassals*, sunk in the lowest state of misery in the World, being under the sole disposal of the uncontrouled Wills [and Lusts] of their [often barbarous] Owners. And these are so either *justly*, being condemn'd for some Capital Crimes, and in Mercy Repriev'd, and spar'd as to Life,

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Life, but deprived of their Liberty, and many Comforts of Life; or else *unjustly*, by a violent Captivity, or by unrighteous Sales and Contracts. But I leave these (under God) to those who are acquainted with their Circumstances, and Temptations, and have opportunity to help them in the way to Heaven. And shall apply my self to,

3. A Third sort of *Servants*, in a state of Life between the two former, and which are most usual amongst us, as making up a part of every Family; and they are such as by reason of Poverty, or a meaner condition in the World, have voluntarily submitted themselves, by Contract, for a certain time, to the disposal of others, according to the Word of God, and Laws of the Realm: And this Calling is founded upon the Will and Providence of God in these two things,

In establishing Property, and thereby a seemingly unequal distribution

*of the good things of this Life.* Without this the Relation of Master and Servant could not stand. Prov. 12. 7. *The rich ruleth over the poor, and the borrower is Servant to the Lender.* This inequality is not by chance, but by the Sovereign Disposer of the Lord of all, 1 Sam. 2. 7. *The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich.* Perhaps in Innocency (if that state had continu'd) all things might have been in common; the Corn and Trees as free to all, as the Light and Air are now. But to suppose it so with us, is to make a perpetual War, many quarrelling about the same thing; as when one Bone is cast amongst several Dogs. And therefore that Community of Goods, which we read of, *Acts 4. 34.* was extraordinary, and lasted but a very little while: so that now all have a right to the things that they do lawfully possess, whether by Inheritance, Donation, or as gotten by honest labour and industry;



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stry ; and as all Laws of Justice and Charity depend upon this, so does this Relation of which we are speaking.

2. His Will and Providence is further seen in rendering all persons in this inequality of their Conditions mutually helpful to each other, yea necessary to one another in this lapsed state ; and the beauty and order of God's Government of the World is much to be observed, that each shall stand in need of his Brother's help towards his own convenient subsistence in the World ; that as it is in the natural (and, as the Apostle saith, in the mystical) so it is in the political Body, 1 Cor. 12. 21, 22. *The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee ; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you ; nay much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble, are necessary. The Rich cannot say to the Poor, We have no need of you.* For whence then will

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they have their Servants? And how can they miss the help which they daily receive by them? As the *Hands* need the *Head* for Guidance and Direction, so does the *Head* need the *Hands* for Work and Service. And indeed by this means, the seeming inequality in the distribution of worldly things is made up. That as it is in *matters of Charity*, as the Apostle doth establish it, *in an equality, that your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance may also be a supply for your want, that there may be equality.* As it is written, *he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack,* 2 Cor. 8. 14, 15. Even just thus it is in *matters of justice*; *in an equality*, that your Money, Wages, and Provision may be a supply for their indigency, and their Work and Service a supply for your inability to discharge your business without them; and so all things  
are

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are set right, one *has nothing over,*  
and the other *has no lack.* And  
perhaps amongst the variety of  
places, no Servants are more neces-  
sary than those in Country-Villa-  
ges; others wear finer Liveries,  
feed higher, and lie *easier*: But  
the labour of the Country Servant  
is of most excellent and general  
use: *The profit of the Earth is for all,*  
*the King himself is serv'd of the field,*  
saith Solomon, Eccles. 5. 9. and tho'  
he must rub through many hard-  
ships, yet he may comfort himself  
in this, that the most drudging  
part of his Service is of necessity to  
the Common-wealth: and when ma-  
ny other Callings are apparently  
unlawful, and not a few exceeding  
doubtful; The Servant's Calling,  
if not abus'd, is unquestionably  
lawful. It is true, there is a Text  
that seems to oppose the Servants  
Calling, and the lawfulness thereof;  
it is, 1 Cor. 7. 23. *You are bought*  
*with the price, be ye not the Servants*

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of Men. With which agree our Lord's Word, *Call no Man Master upon Earth*; and possible it is, that in the Apostles Days, some hearing of the liberty purchased by Christ, might begin to cast off their Service, especially to unbelieving Masters; and therefore we find the Apostles Paul, Peter, and John, so frequently calling Servants to their duty, and instructing them better in it. And though we are told, that Believers are all one in Christ Jesus, Gal. 3, 28. Yet it must be understood of the soul, or inner man, and of the means of grace, in order to the Salvation thereof; for as to the outward Man, they are still bond and free, and abide Master, and Servant still. And so when he bids them to be no more Servants of Men, he has respect to the inner Man, or Conscience, which none can Command but God. And tho our Lord has purchased a liberty for our Bodies, as well as for our Souls,

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*Souls*; yet we attain but to the first-fruits of it now: There remains a *Rest* to be enjoy'd after Death, *then the weary are at rest---* saith Job, and *the Servant is free from his Master*. But we are not now freed from all Molestations, Troubles and Inconveniencies in any state, and so not from that of *Service*, when called thereunto. I shall therefore endeavour to set down,

1. *The Duties of Servants*, and how they may be best perform'd. And then,

2. *The Temptations, and Inconveniencies of their Calling*, and how they may best be prevented, or remedy'd by them.

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### CHAP. II.

*The Duty of Servants* [1] *towards*  
*G O D.*

**T**HERE is such a comprehensive fulness in Scripture, in which

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*the Commandments are exceeding broad, that there is no Case, Condition, or Relation, in which the People of God can be or stand, but there is something in the word that is suited thereunto. There are none so high, but the Word is above them; and none so low, but the Word condescends to them, and speaks to their state and case. Servants may be overlook'd by the World, but they are directed by the Word: And from that Word I shall endeavour to speak to the Duty of Servants, under these three Heads.*

1. *Their Duty towards God.*
2. *Their Duty towards their Masters.*
3. *Their Duty towards their Fellow-Servants, in the Family and Neighbourhood.*

*As to the former; their Duty towards God, must first be minded, as the foundation of their Duty towards Men. I have no hopes to do*  
you

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you good, unless, I can prevail with you in these matters of the highest concern.

(1.) *That you would engage your selves in the Service of God,* and be his Servants in the first place. You are already his Servants at large, and by outward profession: You have taken his *Earnest*, and worn his *Livery*, upon your being Baptized. It hath been no strange thing in the Church of God, to have Infants own'd by God to be his *Servants*, viz. by an external Relation and Profession: They are called so, *Levit. 25. 41, 42.* and since this you have born *his Name*, and Liv'd in his House, and eat of his Bread, and pretended to his Wages, you have a Work to do, and shall at last be called to a Reckoning, when the Great Master comes; but alas, alas! How many are there, that are the *Servants of Christ* in Name, but really the *Servants of Sin* all the time? For know you not, *His Servants*

wants you are whom you obey, Rom. 6. 16. Jesus saith unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that committeth sin, is the Servant of sin, Job 8. 34. You your selves were sometimes foolish----- serving divers Lusts and Pleasures, Tit. 3. 3. Rom. 6. 17, 20. 2 Pet. 2. 19. You are by nature Slaves, in your noblest part, to the vilest of Creatures, in the basest drudgery. How has the Devil made you serve blindfold, in Bonds and Chains? If you are once made sensible of your case, you would sigh and groan to be set at liberty, you would be very inquisitive to find out a better place, you would long to be directed to some better Service. And if so, I come to give you notice of my Master; who tho' he wants not you, nor any Servant that he has, is very willing to entertain you in his Service. It is an honourable Service, and a profitable Service, there is no such Master, no such Wages



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Wages to be had any where else. Our Lord Jesus Christ offers to stand in many near relations to you, and you that know what it is to go to Service, should know upon what terms you may become the Servants of Christ. See then,

1. *That you give up your selves to God and our Lord Jesus Christ by a solemn Covenant and Contract.* It is by Contract that you are Servants in the places where you live, you knew what you did when you were hir'd, upon what terms you took the Earnest : Now, *Why stand you all the day idle ?* Why are your Souls so long out of the Service of so great, so good a Master ? Say not, *No Man has hir'd us :* I this Day call and invite you into the Family of God, *the Household of Faith.* Will you accept of his terms, and consent to the Covenant ? He stands not with you upon the rigorous terms of the Covenant of Works ; He has admitted a Surety, who has  
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satisfy'd the Demands of Justice, and purchas'd most excellent terms of Grace for you : And now *what does the Lord thy God require of thee ?* He expects that you renounce your former Masters. He will have all his Servants be *for him, and not for another ; no Man can serve two Masters.* He expects that you should reverence his Son, that being ransom'd from your Slavery, and bought with the price, you should depend on his Merits, and submit to his Will ; and serve him in your Souls and Bodies which are his. Now who is He that engageth his heart to approach to God ? Have you considered his terms, *You must forsake your Father's House, and your own People : The divers Lusts and Pleasures* which you formerly served, must be entirely and eternally abandoned: you must renounce your vain Confidences, and submit to his righteousness, you must deny your own Wills, and stoop to his Word ;  
you

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you must give up your Selves, Souls,  
and Bodies to be rul'd by him, as  
ever you hope to be sav'd by him.  
Do you now like his terms? If you  
say, No, *as the Lord liveth*, He  
will come down no lower: Where-  
fore *yield your selves unto the Lord,*  
*as you have yielded your members*  
*Servants of iniquity unto iniquity; so*  
*now, yield your members Servants of*  
*righteousness, unto holiness.* I know  
it must be the *Finger of God* that  
must turn about your Hearts, and  
make you willing to this Contract:  
And who knows but it may be *the*  
*day of his power* to some poor Souls?  
Wherefore ponder upon your state  
by nature, till you are deeply affe-  
cted with your former slavery;  
let the making of this Contract be  
look'd upon, as the most solemn  
transaction of your Lives: Get  
into a corner and *count the cost.* He  
sees you as he did *Nathanael*, as  
some think, about the same work  
*under the Fig-tree.* Reckon upon  
*bearing*

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*bearing the burden and heat of the day, upon storms and many a cold blast in your Faces; beg as for your Lives, the assistance of his Spirit, and let each of you take to himself words, and say, Other Lords have had Dominion over me, but I am thy Servant, truly I am thy Servant----- I put my self under the wings of the God of Israel, I will never be the World's again; nor Sin's, nor Satan's any more: I am thine, and thou art mine. Amen, And the Lord God of Israel say so too. Being thus hired, you must see then,*

2. *That you diligently apply your selves to know and do the will of your Master. Being bound you must obey, having open'd your mouths unto the Lord, you cannot go back. You are in for your Lives, yea for ever and ever: You must have your ear bor'd to the Posts of the Door, and say, I love my Master, and will never depart from him: You must chiefly delight in the inward part of*

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of your work, but baulk no duty for any difficulty or danger that you may meet with therein: You must not be quarreling with your Fellow-Servants, when you should be at work; but do all you do as approving your selves to the eye of your Master: You must depend on the strength of Christ in all the Service you perform: and when you have done all, must count your selves *unprofitable Servants*, and look only to his Grace and Merits for Pardon and Acceptance. Nor shall you ever say, that He is a *hard Master, reaping where he did not sow, and gathering where he did not strow*: You shall have no occasion to liken him to the *Egyptian Task-Masters*, that required Brick, but gave no Straw: He is neither Tyrannical in his Commands, nor niggardly in his Encouragements: He is not difficult to be pleased, nor will he always chide: He stands not upon legal perfection, but admits of Repen-

penitance and Sincerity: He offers his assistance, that you may *do all through Christ strengthening you*: He allows you to *look to the recompence of reward*, that you may go the more chearfully on, as those that *know that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord*.

(2.) The next Duty of Servants is to *improve the time of youth and strength*. The usual time of going to Service, is in the younger years; in that Age only are they thought fit for the Service of Men: Oh let not the main work then be neglected in it!

To this purpose I commend to Servants these two Considerations.

1. *How advantageous a time the youthful Age is*, and what pity it is so free a time should be lost, an Age in which God usually lays hold on the hearts of those, whom he brings home to himself, and in which Conversion is much easier, like the bending of a tender Twig,  
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than when some old knotty Root is to be cleav'd, which must have many a Blow ; and indeed as *every thing is beautiful in its season*, so how lovely is early Piety ? when the Young Man in the Gospel had but some good Inclinations, it is said, *Jesus lov'd him*. How strong are such like to be and grow in Grace, when like a Plant early set, it has time to take Root ? How fruitful will they prove, when *they shall still bring forth fruit even to old Age* ? What useful, experimental Christians do such prove, who have had a long time to tast the sweetness of the ways of Christ, that they early chose ? None ever repented at last that they came in to Christ too soon : on the contrary, the Comforts of the Holy Ghost soon convince them, that they have not lost their Pleasures, but chang'd them ; left sensual Transitory Delights for such as are Spiritual and Eternal.

2. On the other side, *How dreadful the neglect of the time of youth will prove*: how woful the hazard, and how certain the damage. Unconverted Youth is as full of sin, as Job's Body was of sores. We read of *youthful lusts*, the *iniquities of our youth*, which corrupt Nature in that Age is strongly inclined to. How long a Vacation is there usually from God and Duty! What *foolish talking and jesting, which is not convenient*? Is there not (if not Oaths and Execrations, yet) abominable lying in the Tongue? How sad is it to see, the Pride and Vanity, Disobedience to Parents, Contempt of Advice, vilifying of the Ministers and Servants of Christ, and above all, the prevailing Love of Pleasures, unlawful Pleasures, or at least of ill Report, reigning amongst Youth at this day! if through Grace they be awakened in their elder Years (which is the best that can be thought



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thought of) yet how bitter will these youthful Sins be to the Conscience, when they are made to possess the iniquities of their youth? they will quickly receive of the Lord double for all their sins, i.e. doubly, and triply more of horror, than ever they found of sweetness in them. But alas, it is very seldom so well with them who have lost their Youth in Sin. *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spot?* &c. How impossible almost to reclaim them, especially if they spent their Youth in Vanity under the Gospel! Life is uncertain, and you have no assurance to live a day, and if you live till Age, alas, how soon will it come? *the time in which you will say, We have no pleasure in it.* How little is the Sinner, that has miss'd his time, and grown grey in sin, acquainted with the Importance of the work, which he has so foolishly delayed! Do you think  
in

in your Consciences, That *all* which you have so frequently heard of Conversion and Regeneration, *all* about a Life of Self-denial, Meekness, Humility, and Contempt of this World, is no more than to say, *Lord, have mercy upon me*, when you are sick, or to send for the Minister to pray by you? Can the Work that requires the best Instruction, the greatest Strength and Composedness of mind, and Retiredness from the World, be performed at last, when you have spent your Youth and Strength in Ignorance and Obstinacy, and come to be full of Pains of Body, and Agonies of Mind, and tyred with Company in Sicknes, and the over-officious Love of Friends as careless as your selves? I know the Instance of the Thief upon the Cross is urged for a putting off Repentance to the last. But suppose it were granted, That there was no Work begun on his Soul, before

before those last hours, yet how many thousands have miscarried by such Delays, to one single Instance of a Man that escap'd ! Is not one to so many thousands, great Odds, and he brought in at such an extraordinary season, as never was before, nor ever will be again ? It was in a time when all things were carried in a miraculous way ; the *Sun was darkned, the Rocks split, the Temple-veil rent, the Earth shook, and the Graves opened*, and a Sinner converted at the last. Our Lord was *spoiling Principalities and Powers*, and as Captains snatch a Standard from the Enemy, as a token of Victory ; so did our Lord rescue this Soul out of the hands of Satan, as a Standard gain'd to *make a Shew of it openly, triumphing thereby over Satan in his Cross*. And how easily may this Instance be retorted on the careless Wasters of their Youth, that the Thief on the Cross came in at the first Call,

Call, and, for ought appears to us, had never one Gospel-Invitation before? Did he ever despise the offers of Grace from Year to Year as you have done? What a difference does this make, that you have had during your time of Youth and Vanity, *Line upon Line, Precept upon Precept*, and have grieved, quenched, tempted, vexed, resisted, and even done despite to the spirit of Grace? And do you think to command the free influences of the Spirit, when you have miss'd your time, and he saith, *He will laugh at your Calamity, and mock when your fear cometh?*

(3.) The last thing I shall name in the Servants Duty towards God, is to do what they do in their places, as to the Lord, and not unto Men, Col. 3. 23. *Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, as eyeing the Image of his Authority in those that God has set over you, for you serve the Lord Christ.* In order to this,      i. See

## for SERVANTS. 25

1. See that in the entrance into Service, or any new Place, you mind chiefly, where you may have the greatest advantages for your Souls. Let not the easiest work, or most wages, be the main thing in your Eye, in the places where you go. Do not run into an infected place for some little outward advantage: Do not chuse to live in a Parish where there is no preaching Ministry, nor in a Family where there is no worship of God; especially if the Governor or Members of the Family be notoriously prophane, shun such a House as you would one in which the plague were broke out. And if God has cast your Lot into a Godly Family, esteem it as a special favour, and remember to improve the price put into your hands. It was a startling Speech of a holy Minister to a Maid Servant, and prov'd of great use to her, when observing how God had plac'd her in a Religi-

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in vit.

ous Family, He told her, *That if she went to Hell out of that Family, she would have a deep place there.*

2. *That in doing the work of your Earthly Masters, you seek the strength, and aim at the glory of your heavenly Master.* Not to mention the Lord's Day as yet, you must every day conscientiously beg a blessing upon your work, and commit your Souls, Bodies, Relations, and lawful undertakings into the hands of God by Faith and Prayer: you partake of the Mercies of the Family, and therefore you must pray down a Blessing upon it. You remember Good *Eleazar*, Gen. 24. 12. *O Lord God of my Master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day, and shew kindness to my Master Abraham, &c.* Prayer is the means to know your duty in your Service, and to be able to perform it; by this means you may have the testimony of your Masters, and of the truth it self, which *Jacob* had of his Master

for SERVANTS. 27

Master Laban, Gen. 30. 27. *I have learned by experience, that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake.* And this leads me to the second Part of the Servants Duty.

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CHAP. III.

*The Servants Duty [2.] towards their Masters.*

**H**E is the good Christian that is good in the place and relation wherein God has set him, and that is the Religious Servant, who out of a Principle of love to God, and in obedience to his Command, does perform his duty to them to whom God has subjected him.

Your Duty therefore towards your Masters consists, 1. In the reverend subjection of mind, and respectful honour that your place requireth. Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their Masters

worthy of all honour, that the name of Christ, and his Doctrine, be not blasphem'd, 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2. this command of the Apostle is the more remarkable, because it is spoken to them that had Infidel Masters: and if yours be Unbelievers, wicked Persons, without so much as a profession, your Duty is more difficult; it is hard to honour a Fool, or reverence one that you frequently see in his Vomit of Drunkenness, or venom of Malice and Passion. But yet their Authority they have from God, and you must reverence the Image of God's Dominion in them, lest you cause the *name of Christ to be blasphem'd*, and lest you give occasion to the wicked Man to reproach Religion, and to say, *These are your Professours, your Religious Servants, ay, they are all alike.* And if so be that God has subjected you to those that are serious and Godly, you must honour them the more. So saith the same Apostle, *ver. 3.*  
and



for SERVANTS. 29

and they that have believing masters let them not despise them, because they are Brethren, but rather do them service because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. Be not you like those insolent Youths that set light by their Masters, either before their faces or behind their backs. God has not set you as Companions with your Masters, nor does he allow of a sawcy Carriage in their presence, nor to talk disrespectfully of them, or of their Imperfections in their absence. The more careful they are to instruct, reprove, and restrain you from sin and vanity, the more do you prize them, and bless God for them. Be as ready (or more) to be catechized, examined and directed about your Souls, as about any business that you are employ'd about.

2. Your Duty lies in a Religious faithfulness, and constant fidelity, in all that you undertake. When you

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hired your selves, you sold your *time* and labour to your Masters, all but what God and nature more immediately requires to be reserv'd : and besides the sin against God in idleness, you defraud your Master, if you idle away an hour, that should be employ'd in his business. And to delay his Messages, put off his work to others; to slubber over his work, or leave it half undone, is to rob your Master of the Wages that is due for the work, which you should have done accordingly, but did not. This is the *Eye-Service*; which the Apostle condemns, Col. 3. 22. when Hypocritically you seem earnest in his work when his Eye is upon you, but loyter away your time when he has turn'd his back. They that are unfaithful in their Master's work, will not ('tis to be fear'd) make much Conscience of defrauding him in his *Estate*. How quickly does the Devil teach an ungodly Servant to make  
bold

bold with his Master's Money, in buying or selling, and to excuse it by the secrecy, or smallness of the matter; till they who made nothing to trample on God's Law for a Penny, came afterwards to Pounds and higher Robberies. And here let me beg of Servants to take heed of Ale-Houses, Gaming-Houses, places of Drunkenness or Unclean-ness, of loving Cards and Dice, or sitting up to unreasonable hours at such Vanities: such will need much Money to play away and riot away, and then how strong is the temptation to keep back, or convey away part of the Money, that you sold the Goods for! if you have any of these Devices, know, It is a downright Theft, and if it be but a Penny, you know not where it will stop. They that take a little, when the Temptation is strong will venture upon a great deal; and they that rob their Master to day, will rob o-

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thers to morrow. And how sad and bitter a Case must this prove, when the best that can be hop'd for, is a *Confession* of your Theft, full of sorrow and shame, and the *restitution* of every farthing, to the utmost of your power; without which there can be no Repentance, and so no Salvation. And if this be not done, your Thefts in your Service will be like Moths in your Goods, when you come to get something of your own: *of your own* did I say? Yea, till you have made restitution, you do not eat *your own bread*; and 'tis not your giving part of your ill-gotten Money to the poor, that will prevent the horror of Conscience at last. *God hates robbery for burnt-offering*. I'll add but one Instance more under this Head, which is the Perfidiousness of Servants in any *Trust* committed to them. Like the unjust Steward, that when there was owing his Master *an hundred measures*

for SERVANTS. 33

measures of wheat, order'd them to take their bill and write four-score. And if you should say, but did not the Lord commend the unjust steward? Yes, for his wisdom, not for his cheating his Master. It is a Parable, and we must mind the scope of it, which is to shew us a pattern of foresight; how we should secure a better habitation, when these Tabernacles fail, as this wicked Servant look'd about him what should become of him, when his Master turn'd him out. Another manner of Servant was Jacob, who had a hard Service in the Summers Heat, and Winters Frosts for twenty Years, yet could say, Gen. 30. 33. *My righteousness shall answer for me*----- and if it be said, Did not Jacob play fast and loose with his Master, in laying the Rods in the watering Troughs? I suppose not; the effect being not natural, but by a Special Providence, and therefore we find the fact not by his own invention,

C 5

vention, but by God's appointment in a Dream, *Gen. 31. 10.* who thus gave away what was *Laban's* to *Jacob*. But beyond all Examples is that plain Command, *Tit. 2. 10. 11.* Not purloining, but shewing all good fidelity, that they may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.

3. Your Duty lies further in a willing Obedience, and conscientious hearkning to your Master's Commands. And tho' you must not perform your Service as Men-pleasers, *Col. 3. 22. i. e.* as meerly such, you must please God chiefly, as the one thing necessary, yet in, and under him, the same Apostle tells you, That your Obedience to your Masters, lies in doing their pleasure in all that they set you about, *Tit. 2. 9.* Exhort Servants to be obedient to their Masters, and to please them well in all things. Indeed we read of a pleasing Men, that will not stand with our being the Servants of Christ: You therefore still remem-

for SERVANTS. 35

remember, God is their Master and yours. And if your earthly Master command any thing contrary to God's Word ; as to Lye, or Cheat for his gain, or the like, as you love your Souls, obey God rather than Men. But now as to all lawful things, the Command stands good, Col. 3. 22. *Servants, obey in all things, your Masters, according to the flesh-----* So that if the things be mean or low, and, as you think, below you, you must not nicely stand upon your Honour, but set about your work ; yea tho' the Command be harsh and unpleasant, you must bring down your high Stomach, and submit. So you'll read, 1 Pet. 2. 18. *Servants, be subject to your Masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.* If your Master be froward, hasty, difficult to be pleased, and it may be ready to injure you (this is his sin, and a very great one) yet you must perform your Duty

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Duty to God and him. But you'll say, Is there no Remedy for a poor *Servant oppress'd* by a Churlish *Nabal*, no way to avoid his Rigour, and unjust Severity? Why Yes, He may for the present withdraw himself prudently to avoid his Master's rage; and tho' in case of the utmost extremity the Servant may obtain the help of the Magistrate against an unreasonable Master, yet usually the Apostle's Caution is sufficient, for the Servants to forbear all muttering returns, which he calls, Tit. 2. 9.---- *not answering again.* Which is not meant that they must refuse a respectful Answer to Questions, when they are ask'd. That is as great a fault on the other side (as the Wise Man saith) *when they understand, not to answer*, Prov. 29. 19. But that they should not thwart and contradict, or by rugged and unmannerly words provoke their Master's Indignation against them. On the  
con-



for SERVANTS. 37

contrary, there is required a willing Obedience, called a doing what they do *heartily*, or from the heart, *Col. 3. 23.* and if in harsh and unpleasant things you must obey, how are they to blame, that refuse their Masters Orders, in the most gentle and necessary things? That will tell their Masters *they were not hir'd to be catechiz'd*, or the like. Which is not only an affront to God in the contemning of his Ordinances for your Souls, but a disobedience to them whom God has set over you. For when you become Servants, it is not only in this or that work that suits your humour, as if you were to set your Conceits and Wills against their Commands; but in all lawful things belonging to your place, whereby you may testifie your Obedience to them.

CHAP.

## CHAP. IV.

*The Duty of Servants [3.] towards  
their Fellow-servants in the Family  
and Neighbourhood.*

THEY that are of the same Cal-  
ling, or state of life in the  
World, are wont to be counted  
*Brethren*: and especially when they  
live near to each other, should  
most entirely love as such. Soci-  
ety is the great Comfort of Life,  
and Equality of Condition much  
adds to the sweetness of it, where  
there be other higher Qualificati-  
ons. Indeed there is hardly any  
word so much abus'd as that of  
*Good-Fellowship*. Men mistake the  
*Order* of it, making it chiefly to  
respect the Body, which is to be  
minded in subordination to the  
Soul: and no less, the *Matter* of  
it. *Good-Fellowship* with them is  
to

to be amongst their Cups, at best  
in idle Chat and Vanity. And Ser-  
vants and Youth hear it told by  
some grown grey in carelesness,  
What *Joie* *with* *good* *neighbourhood*  
there was, when they had not so  
much *Preaching*, nor such ado a-  
bout Religion. But the Christian  
Servant has *not* *so* *learned* *Christ*.  
There are more noble Ends of So-  
ciety, than careles Servants know;  
such as, *VOIT* *now* *that* *the* *Lord* *is* *in* *the* *land* *of* *the* *living* *God*.  
*1. Mutual Watchfulness*, respecti-  
ally over the Souls of each other.  
It is true, That here Charity must  
begin at home, in a cautious fear  
of danger to your own Souls, espe-  
cially if your Companions in the  
Family be none of the best. Take  
heed you be not Tempters of o-  
thers, nor your selves tempted by  
them. Remember the Exhortati-  
on that speaks unto you as unto  
Children, *Prov. 10* *10*. *My Son,*  
*if Sinners entice thee, consent thou*  
*not.* And undue Familiarity be-  
tween

tween Servants of different Sexes in a Family, has had fatal and tragical Effects. How often has Opportunity and Privacy expos'd Men and Maids that live together to the Devil's Temptations. And in houses, where the Masters have set battlements on the roof, they have leap'd over into the ditch, (*for a Whore is a deep ditch, and he that is abhorred of the Lord shall fall therein, Prov. 22.14.*) How much more are Servants in danger, where they have no warnings, but wicked Examples; how soon do filthy Words, and wanton Dalliances betray them? *He that feareth the Lord shall escape the snare, but the sinner shall be taken in it, Eccles. 7.26.* And if they be of the same Sex, there is no small danger in a converse with those that have infectious diseases, and running sores of prophaneness upon them. If they be only in the Neighbourhood, that are thus infected

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infected, it is more easie to avoid them. 2 Thes. 3. 6. *Now we command you, That you withdraw your selves from every brother that walketh disorderly ----- Who toucheth pitch and is not defiled? Can any take coals in his bosom and not be burnt?* But if the Plague be in the House where you are, and your Fellow-servants Drunkards, prophane Swearers, Scoffers at Religion, your Case is the more dangerous. How came you into this Hell on Earth, where these things are suffered? Ought you not to be deeply humbled, That you made no better choice? And upon what terms do you stay longer there? You had need have a clear Call, to dwell in a Pest-house. Nevertheless while you stay in that place, *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, but shalt in any wise re-buke him, and not suffer sin upon him,* Lev. 19. 17. It seems without this, you can neither testifie  
your

your hatred of their sins, nor free your selves from the imputation of hatred of their Souls. You must do it in faithfulness to your own Souls, and you know not but you may thereby *gain* theirs. You must watch the best Opportunity that your nearness to them will afford you, to *tell them their fault between them and you alone*; and with plainness lay open their sin before them, *this open rebuke is better than secret love*. And continue your Duty, if they go on to sin, unless, by scoffing Malignity, and Fury, they shew themselves to be *the dogs and swine* that you must not *throw your pearls before, lest they turn again and rent you*. And then you can do no more, unless by getting others to rebuke them, who by their Authority, may be more likely to prevail, as *Joseph brought to his Father his son's evil report*. And if Providence has cast your lot amongst  
such

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such as are civil and towardly,  
your Duty will be more easie.  
They will willingly be warn'd by  
you, and thankfully take your cau-  
tions for their Souls good: you  
will not be tempted so much to  
use the words of the first Murder-  
er, *Am I my Brother's keeper?* but  
if (not only civil, but) Godly Ser-  
vants meet in the same House or  
Neighbourhood, they will agree  
together to watch over and mutu-  
ally to admonish one another.  
*Two are better than one --- for if  
they fall, the one will lift up his  
fellow, but wo be to him that is alone  
when He falleth, for He hath not a-  
nother to help him up ----- and if  
one prevail against him, two shall  
withstand him, and a threefold cord  
is not quickly broken, Eccl. 4. 10. &c.*  
By this watchfulness over each o-  
ther they will be combin'd against  
the Devil's Temptation, and for-  
tified against the flouts of those  
that will think it strange, that they  
run

run not with them in the same excess of riot. Especially if they conscientiously observe the Second Duty, which is,

2. *Christian Conference*, the Servants discoursing together about the things of God. Besides your vacant Hours in Winter Evenings, and when your Work is done, many parts of your Work afford leisure for Discourse, yea, and matter for spiritual improvement, if your Hearts will serve you. Some of you have more knowledge than others, and some more tender affections, and how well would these Gifts be employ'd, if like *those that feared the Lord*, Malac. 3. 16. *You spake often one to another about Soul-Affairs.* Good Affections in Discourse do even naturally kindle the like in those you are talking with: as Metal put into a Furnace is never melted so soon, as when added to some of the same Metal, melted before. *As Iron sharpens Iron, so*  
does



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does the Countenance of a Man, his Friend. How easily may two or three well-disposed Servants carry away a whole Sermon in their Memories, when they shall repeat over the Heads to each other as they go along, or when they come home. This would make *your hearts burn within you*, and prepare you for examination of your Masters in the Family-Worship. But there are none so fitted for *Christian Conference*, as they that can Communicate to each other, *what God has done for their Souls*. The Schoolmen say, Angels of an Inferiour Order cannot enlighten those of a Superiour. Sure I am the meanest Servant, that is truly Gracious, tho' of weak Parts and Gifts, may enlighten and warm by their humble Converse those that have greater Natural Endowments.

3. The other Duty is *their ready helpfulness of each other, in all things wherein their assistance may be useful.*

Take

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Take each others concerns as your own, not as Busie-bodies, but as helpers of them in their Work, when your Master's Service may be the better carry'd on. Let there be no fallings out amongst your selves, no more than grumbling at your Masters, that other Servants have lesser work, or better usage than you. Be as desirous of their good as your own, and as ready to help them in any Sickneses or Straits, that your Fellow-Servants may be in, as you would be to be helpt your selves in the like case. And especially rejoyce if you may be any ways helpful for their Souls. Some of them cannot Read, and you may teach them, and many ways further them in knowledge, or encourage any good Inclinations. When other Servants provoke one another to wrath, you must *provoke* your Fellow-Servants *to love, and good works.* One Servant easily brings another to Instruction, by  
Counsel

Counsel and Example, and makes every Duty delightful by Company in it. And how sweet is it for Servants to get into a Corner, and Pray together? What a Blessing will they be to one another, and to the Family and Neighbourhood where they Live?

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CHAP. V.

*Of the Temptations and Hindrances of the Servants Calling. [1.] By being bred in Ignorance.*

**T**HE Duties of Servants are of such Importance, that the Devil and a corrupt Heart will be sure to lay in the way, or at least to pretend many hindrances. Indeed all Places and Callings have their Inconveniencies, and the Devil suits his Baits not only to the inward Constitutions, but to their outward Conditions. He has one  
Wile

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Wile for the Rich, and another for the Poor, one for the Master and another for the Servant. And as every one should be acquainted with his Special Duty, so with the particular Temptations to which his place does expose him, and what Remedies the Word does prescribe. I shall name three Hindrances of Servants more comprehensive than the rest.

1. The First is *Ignorance*, the common snare of Countrey Servants. Many of which, by the Poverty, and Carelessness of their Parents, and Friends, cannot so much as Read, and tho' some would Charitably have paid for their Schooling in their Child-hood, they could not be spar'd from their Work. Many of them are of such a rough Disposition, and rugged temper, that they are *as a wild Asses Colt*, Job 11.12, and indeed this is the dreadfulnes of their case, that they are not only ignorant, but (as they grew

grew up) are affectedly and willingly so. Nay so far are some befotted, that they make their ignorance their excuse or pretence to cast off all duty, and to oppose those that would help them in it: they think it enough to say they are not *Book-learn'd*, or are *no Scholars*: and though they were created with faculties capable of understanding and remembring the things of God, and in other things are wise for their age and breeding, yet *the Oxe knows his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib, but my people do not know.* --- Isa. 1. 2. Great is the compassion and condescension of God in revealing the mysteries of Religion to us. *He has not dealt so with other Nations.* He might have spoken his mind in lofty strains, above the capacity of Creatures to conceive, but the necessary things are so plainly revealed, and easily remembred, that even Children have attained to great understand-  
D ing

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ing therein, and yet they are truths of so great moment, that the learned Apostle despis'd all the *wisdom of this World* in comparison of the knowledge of Christ, nay, *these things the Angels themselves desire to pry into.* How frequently has this general ignorance been bewail'd, and the danger of it discovered to our careless Servants? How often has the cry of wisdom been heard, *How long you simple ones will you love simplicity, and ye fools hate knowledge?* if you had had no means of Grace, nor Gospel light, the case had been lamentable, Pro. 29. 18. *where there is no Vision, the people perish; but this is the condemnation that light is come into the World, and men love darkness rather than light,* Joh. 3. 19. if the word of Christ had not been spoken to you, you had not had sin, in comparison of what you have now, for now you have no cloak for your sin, your conceitedness and obstinacy. *Jeh. 9. 39, 41.* your ignorance is no less

for SERVANTS. 51

less than direct enmity, and saying to God, *Depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,* Job 21. 14. and how just will be the Sentence, for God to say to you, *Depart from me, I know you not.* Thus my people perish for lack of knowledge, Hos. 6. 4. and have that dreadful Curse mention'd, Job 36. 12. to dye without knowledge; and being a people of no understanding, *He that made them will not have mercy upon them, and he that form'd them will shew them no favour,* Isa. 27. 11. And when Christ shall be revealed in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know not God, how will the Men of Nineveh, of Tyre, of India, rise up in judgment against those that perish in ignorance, from under Gospel-light, and Calls of Grace therein?

To remedy this fore hindrance of all good, I exhort Servants,

1, *Diligently to attend on the means of knowledge, and carefully to improve them.* You do (at least seemingly)

attend on the preaching of the Word in the Publick Assemblies, but alas ! To how little purpose, you easily perceive, when you cannot give the least account of what you have heard, nor of the scope or drift of the plainest Sermons ; and except in some few whose Affections being drawn out by a Sermon, do afterwards seek after knowledge, we find by Experience, that Preaching, to those that are ignorant of the first Principles, is like building without any Foundation laid. God has appointed *Catechizing* as the ordinary means of Instruction in his Church, which you are called to submit unto. And perhaps your Submission to the Ministry in this Ordinance, is the only possible way that knowledge is to be had for some of you. Are there not of you that live with Masters as careless as your selves, from whom you shall not hear a serious word about God or Christ, from  
one



one end of the Week to the other? Which way can you expect to learn, if you refuse our help? Think not that Catechizing is only for Children, when your selves are *Children in understanding*, and being grown in Years, have need to make the more hast to learn. If you stay a little longer, it will be too late to teach you, nothing almost being more untractable than ignorant and ungodly Old Age. Will you defer being instructed till you have Families of your own, and have others to teach and instruct? Oh, do not multiply the number of Prayerless, Careless Families. I know the usual Plea is, That you are asham'd to answer, especially before the Congregation. Indeed ignorance is matter of shame, but it is every where represented in Scripture as a lovely thing, to see young persons forward in coming to Christ, and a great honour it is to be examples to others in seeking

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after instruction. It is a sad thing that the Ordinances should be accused as a matter of *shame*, and how then can you think of appearing before the greatest Assembly at last? And what dreadful *shame* and confusion of Face, will Christless Souls be covered with then, when all your secret sins shall be made manifest, and all your foolish hopes dash'd, and God himself shall pour contempt upon you? It is true, it is better to come and learn privately, as *Nicodemus by Night*, than not at all; but a little use and experience of the good of it, will make Publick Catechizing delightful to you. For indeed you must do what you do with a willing cheerfulness: *Let a Man account of us as Stewards*, &c. Now the Family run willingly to the Steward for their Food. And they that know what the Scripture means by *digging for knowledge*, will attend upon the means with constancy. For then  
*shall*

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*shall you know if you follow on to know the Lord, Hos. 6. 3. Supposing also that you practise what you know, for a good understanding have all they that do his Commandments, Ps. 111. 10.*

2. The other remedy is to cry and pray hard for knowledge, and as Solomon saith, to lift up your voice for understanding. Pray, and get others to pray for you --- that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, Col. 1. 9. that God would open your understandings, and then give light and knowledge thereunto, that the father of glory would give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, The eyes of your understandings being enlightned, Eph. 1. 17, 18. that you may not only be taught of men, but, as it is written in the Prophets, may be taught of God. That you may not only have some Conceptions of Christ in your Minds,

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of his Person, his Nature, his Perfections, his Offices, and States of Humiliation and Exaltation ; but that *you may comprehend with all Saints what is the height, and length, and breadth, and depth of the love of Christ, and to know it, though it passeth knowledge ;* that you may know him in his Beauty, his Fullness, his Willingness, his Presence and Power of his love in your Souls ; that you may so know him, as by Faith to come to him , receive and embrace him. These are the things which he has promis'd to bestow in the Covenant of Grace, and gives forth in a way of Prayer. Go to him as the *Father of lights, who gives liberally, and will not upbraid , nor twit you with the ignorance in which you were bred, nor the carelessness in which you liv'd so long.*

C H A P.

CHAP. VI.

*The hindrances of Servants calling  
[2.] by discontent and repining at  
their condition.*

**T**HEY that know little of God, have understanding sufficient for their business in the World, but for want of saving Knowledge and Grace, how many poor Servants go on uncomfortably in it? they look upon themselves as hardly dealt with, and are apt to fret and fume at the narrow Portion allotted to them by Providence, to be laid in some cold out-House, or meanest Loft, of a poor Cottage, to have the leavings of the course fare there; hard work, cold blasts abroad, and, perhaps, hard words and unkind usage at home: this grates upon the Spirit, and makes them think their Life more miserable.

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able than any others; and they that know not God, will talk like Heathens, and rail at luck or Fortune, for placing them in such mean circumstances. This makes them go heavily on, and their wrigling makes their Yoke to gaul them, and every part of the work uneasy that they go about: they are apt to grudge at any one that goes finer, and (as they think) fares better, and that every one does them wrong, that does not sweat as much as they; and if God be provoked by their fretting, they mind it not. He sends them troubles and crosses, which meeting with a proud unbroken Spirit, do cause them to tumultuate and murmur the more. Nor is discontent the sin only of Servants, but of their Masters and others; for it is not in the condition, but in the temper of their Spirits, till the heart be chang'd and cur'd. But I shall mention such remedies, as do particularly

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larly respect the persons to whom I am speaking. It concerns All that lie under this temptation, to consider the Sovereignty of God, and his Wisdom in appointing their lot, that Nature is contented with a little, and Grace with less ; considering that the lowest condition out of Hell, is mercy to poor lost Sinners, how easily God can change their lot, if he sees it good, and how sweet the lowest state may be made to them by Quietness, and Contentment. But there are two special Considerations that I commend to Servants, in order to the removing this hindrance of their Duty, that from henceforth they may bear the Inconveniencies of their Callings, with a more composed mind, that they may not be weary of their condition, or irksomely long for alterations of it ; but may wait God's leisure, and be kindly affected towards others that are in a higher condition in the World than they. r. And

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1. And the First Consideration is, *The happiness of the condition of Servants, in comparison of that of many others.* For not to compare you with the Miserable Vagrants, that eat the Bread out of the Mouths of the true Poor; touching which disorderly Persons, we have the Apostle's Command, *That if they will not work, they must not eat.* I rather speak of the Condition of such as you never knew, or considered in your Discontent. How far then, has God set you above Servants in other Times and Places, which have been, and are compelled to Slavery, and forced Subjection to the Lusts of Men. Of this sort were many of those Servants to whom the Apostles wrote; and if they were to do their work *heartily* without grudging, how much more should you? And in our Age have you never heard of the Slaves in the Plantations, and how they are us'd (especially with

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respect to their Souls) by some more Savages than the Negro's that they call so? And what Servant in *England* dares repine at their state, that has ever known the Condition of their own Countrey-men, when Slaves in *Algiers*, and other places: For not only are they enslav'd in a strange Countrey, whereas the Smoak of ones own Countrey, is sweeter than the clearest Air in a strange Land: but the Miseries they suffer under Barbarous Masters, calls for your pity towards them, and contentment with your merciful Lot. For being bereft unjustly of all their Goods, they are constantly compelled to the hardest Labour, without any rest, scarce to drink a little Water, and eat their decay'd Barly, and Broth of Camels, worn out with Work, like themselves; and this with the only intermission of four Days in the Year, upon the slightest Faults cruelly beaten, that they often die  
of

of their pain. Indeed their Lives are no further valu'd, than for their Service, or Slavery, and their Souls in greater danger, by continual Temptations to escape all these Hardships, by a dreadful Apostasie. And to leave these to consider some others, that seem to have a Life as full of Pleasure, as these that I have mention'd have of Misery ; I mean the *Servants of State*, whose Life you so much envy for their Ease, and Fine Cloths. Did you but consider their Temptations to Idleness, and thereby to almost all other sins, you would see that God has delivered you from many snares, to which they are daily expos'd. By appointing you a moderate Labour (which is for the Health of your Bodies, and the good of the Publick) your Souls are not in danger of flattering the Great, or ministering to the Pride and Lusts of those, that think their Riches privilege them to live a Life of Sloth  
and

and Sensuality. Not that it is thus in all great Houses, God forbid; but that it is very difficult *for a Camel to get through the Eye of a Needle*. And how general is the Debauchery, and Ruine of those Servants, that at first you grudged at? But to come nearer home, how free is the Servants Life, and void of those Troubles, to which even your own Masters, and others that live round you, are frequently expos'd? They have great Rents to pay, and the Money hardly got to pay them with; they have Meat and Drink to provide for you, and Wages at the Years end; one trespasses on their Fields, and another defrauds them of their Debts. They hardly bear their own wants, and more hardly the wants of Wives and Children: They have Losses to be made up abroad, and Houses to be repair'd at home: And you see all this, but feel it not. You have no care (next to the

the pleasing God) but to do your work in the Day, and sleep quietly in the Night. Are not these burdens on their Minds, greater than any you bear on your Shoulders? And to name but one thing more under this Head, Is there not a worse service, or slavery, than that I speak of, in *Algiers*? Are there not Covenant-Slaves of *Satan*, that have sold themselves to work wickedness, and made a kind of *League with Hell*? All that worse than *Egyptian Service*, *wherewith they are made to serve*, Is it not *with rigour*? And though they are Lords and Ladies, and have long Trains of Servants, yet if they are Unconverted, Are they not Servants? Yea, Bond-slaves to *Sin*, *Satan*, *Mammon*, and the *fear of Death*? *Let not thy heart envy sinners.* But this last Comparison does respect the Godly Servants only, and so brings me to the second Consideration to cure this Discontent, *viz.*

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2. *The much more happiness of the Servants of God, though in the lowest and meanest services amongst Men. As He that is called being free is the Lord's Servant : so He that is called, being a Servant, is the Lord's Free-man, 1 Corinth. 7. 22. Though he ty'd fast your Yoke by his Word, in all due Obedience to your Masters ; yet, having broke the Yoke of Sin, He has made you freer than Princes that continue under it. Whom the Son makes free they are free indeed, John 8. 36. His Service is perfect Freedom, though your Service to Men should be heavy to a Bondage. How precious a Liberty has Christ bought for you, and bestow'd by his Spirit upon you, if you belong to him, though the meanest Servant here in the lowest Cottage ! He has given you the external Liberty of his House, admitted you to feast at his Table, given you free leave to partake of his Provision,*  
and

and appointed his Stewards to dispence it accordingly, and *whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, all are yours.* He has sweetned this with a *Liberty* of Conscience, and of a Judgment rightly inform'd: for though he has not delivered you from a subjection to Magistrates any more than to your Masters; yet so free has he made you, That nothing shall bind your Conscience but his own Word, and all your Obedience to the Commands of Men, shall be *for Conscience sake* towards God, requiring that subjection. But, above all, where *the Spirit of the Lord is there is Liberty* of Heart and Will in the work of your Master. Not a *Liberty* to live in sin, which is an Abuse of the word, and a *Liberty* that is not in Heaven it self; the Perfections of God are an Eternal Law to himself, that *he cannot lye, or deny himself;* but an holy exemption from the Servility of Sin, and a  
free

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free propension to whatsoever is good ; that whereas before you could not pray, you were bound up and fetter'd, *He has now brought you out of Prison, that you may praise his Name.* That under any temptation to discontent in the Service of Men, your Souls should be raised in Praise of your Great Master, who has already entered you into the glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, and will at last set you at liberty from the burden of this flesh, and the Body it self, at the last day, from the hand of the Grave, and will make all his Servants *Kings and Priests to God and our Father.* Oh, blessed are thy Servants that shall dwell in thy house, for they will be still praising thee. And blessed be his glorious Name, who took upon him the form of a Servant, and was himself bound to a Pillar, That he might set us free. Who has proclaimed Liberty by his Gospel, and the opening of the Prison

son doors to them that are bound, who has given us of his free Spirit. and made us willing in the day of his power, and here we offer up our selves, our Souls and Bodies as our most reasonable Service. We thank thee, and praise thy glorious Name. But who am I, or what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee, 1 Chron. 29. 13, 14. And let none repine at being Servants, who through Grace, have such a Liberty, and Freedom as this.

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CHAP. VII.

*The Hinderances of the Servants  
Calling [3.] Want of Time, real  
or pretended.*

**T**O every Work there is an appointed Time, and every Duty has the special Season for it; but here lies the Servants difficulty, their Time is their Master's, and his Work fills it up, that they have not the leisure for Duties and Exercises of Religion that others have. Others can read and pray as long as they will, but Servants are called up early about their Work, and tyred with it all day, and what time then have they for Prayer, Meditation, or Covenanting with God? Truly, by the way, *to whom much is given, of them God requires the more.* And they that have Estates, and less necessary Business in the World,

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World, must find more Time for the immediate Service and Worship of God, than the poor Servant can. But still *one thing is necessary*, and they that have most Business in the World, have Souls to mind as well as others. Some, indeed, have Masters that do purposely allow them time, and see that they spend it in Reading, and other Duties; and some, whose Hearts God has inclin'd by Grace, can find time to have their Hearts with God, when their Hands are in the World; and what sweet and Heavenly Meditations does their Plowing, Sowing, Reaping, and other parts of their Work, afford them? Though they cannot be long at Prayer, they endeavour to be the more fervent in it; they go the more unwillingly from it, and come to it the more chearfully again. When they go into the Fields to their Work, or come back, they have as free a time, as  
if

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*if entered into a Closet, and the door shut about them.* But it is not thus with all; some have rough and careless Masters, that hurry them to bed, that they may rise the sooner about their Work, and think all time lost when that is not in hand, and the slothful Heart is glad of the Excuse, to silence Conscience, which else would check them, for living without Prayer, and other Duties that they have heard press'd upon them: offer them a Catechism, they have no time to learn it; others go to an Opportunity for Instruction, but they cannot be spar'd to go with them. Like *Felix*, they put it off to a *more convenient time*, which yet never comes.

To remedy this fore Inconvenience, there are these Two plain Directions.

1. *That they carefully avoid all those things, that unnecessarily and sinfully take up their time, and then they*

they will quickly find, That want of Time is more a pretended than real Hinderance of the Servant's Duty. To speak plainly to you, How did such and such (whom you know, and perhaps have laugh'd at, as too precise) get their knowledge of the things of God? How do they get time for Prayer, and Reading, and Examination of their Hearts? Have not they as hard Places as you, and as much Work on their hands, and better done? Is it not that they redeem and improve the time, that you trifle and squander away? Is it not known of some of you, That some merry Meetings (as they call them) and drunken Bouts, have first stolen away your Hearts, and then steal away your Time? And because you did not, it may be, come reeling home, you think it nothing, that you have wasted the good Creatures of God, and the *Time*, which he lent you for higher

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er Ends. Oh, how will this bite like an Adder when time shall be gone indeed, and the Angel shall lift up his hand, and swear by him that lives for ever and ever, that time shall be no more, and thou mourn at last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed, and say, *How have I bated Instruction?----- and have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me?* Prov. 5.

11, 12, 13. Do you think, That this Plea will hold at last, when all the Tribes of the Earth shall be gathered before their Judge, and you stand trembling amongst the rest? Shall it suffice to say, I heard indeed the Calls of Grace, but, Lord, I was a Servant, and had but little time? Will He not say, *Out of thine own mouth I condemn thee, thou wicked Servant.* Thou knewest that thou hadst but a little time, why then didst thou squander it away amongst thy idle Com-

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panions? Why then didst thou sit up to such unseasonable hours at thy Cards and other Sports? If thou dost indeed want time, leave off thy Chat, thy idle Stories, that fill up the long Winter Evenings, and other vacant hours, and thou wouldst have it. Yea, better that thou shouldst work the harder, and sleep the less, that thou mayst get time for thy Soul, before Sickness and Death overtake thee, and thou cry in vain, *Call time back again, Oh, call time back again*, when it is too late, and thou art lanching into the Ocean of Eternity.

2. That Servants that want time all the Week, *do the more dearly prize the Lord's Day, and improve the Seasons of Grace therein.* When by God's Consent you contracted with your Masters for your Time, this Day He reserv'd for his own special Service. And that Masters might know, That the Commandment about the Sabbath was

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was for their Servants as well as themselves, He adds this to the Law in one place---*That thy Man-servant and thy Maid-servant may rest as well as thou*, Dent. 5. 14. This is now *the Labourers rest*, and see you lose not a minute of so precious a time. Dispatch your Business the sooner the Night before, shake off your Worldly Thoughts, and go seasonably to rest, that you may not lie abed longer on the Lord's Day Morning than at other times. Oh, think not (when you say, *you want time*) to keep a Sabbath in an outward slothful rest, as your Horses, and other Beasts do. Meddle with no worldly Business on this Holy Day, but what is of Necessity; and count nothing of necessity that hinders the Work of the Day, and may be put off till another time. If you have Masters that know the Worth of a Sabbath, they'll take care of you especially

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on this day, not only to keep you from all Business that is not suited to the Day, but to put you upon all Holy Exercises therein ; and how sweet is it , to see Masters come to the Publick Assemblies *furnished with their Train* , not suffering a Servant that can be spar'd , to stay at home, or lag behind ! And if you have careless Masters, that would have you make your visits, or go journies on this Day, because they cannot spare you on another, rather deny your selves the Liberty offer'd you, than be depriv'd of the Dearer Liberty of the House of God : Above all, avoid the prophane Feasts that yet are kept up in some places on the Lord's Day. Let no Business of your own hinder you (where it may be) from attending Forenoon and Afternoon on the Publick Worship, and that with Seriousness and Reverence, as those that know into whose Presence you are come : and  
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beg earnestly for the Power of the Spirit to accompany the Word to your Souls. Do not think the Sabbath is ended when the Sermon is done. Let no wicked Companions perswade, That you may *find your own pleasures on this Holy Day*, Isa. 58. 13. Remember what an Inlet Sabbath-breaking has been into all Wickedness; how many wicked Servants, from cheating their Masters, have been drawn to other Crimes, and on the Gallows confess'd, That neglecting and prophaning the Sabbath was the sin that exposed them to those Temptations which brought them thither. Be you a *Companion of them that fear the Lord*, and if you have none such to confer with about what you have heard, as you go home or when you come there, be the more by your selves: double all the Spiritual Duties now, that you have less time for on other days. Be ready to give an account

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of your profiting, if you are so happy, as to have Masters that will examine you; and count not the Day, or the Duties therein, *a Weariness*, but *call the Sabbath a Delight*. Admire the Kindness of God to poor Servants, in appointing a Day on purpose for that, which else you could hardly have found time for. Look upon it as the Great Thanksgiving-Day, Praise him for all his wondrous Works; especially, for your Redemption by our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when He had finished his Suffering-work, did rise again from the Dead on the First Day of the Week, and set his own Name on that Day; That they that are tyred with their Labours all the Week, may rest upon it; That the meanest of his People may rejoice therein, in hopes of an Everlasting Sabbath above; where these Earthly Relations will cease, and there will be no more Distinction

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inction of *Master* and *Servant* ;  
but all swallowed up in one Spi-  
ritual Relation, to Him, of whom  
the whole Family in Heaven and  
Earth is named, and in one Holy  
Service of Praise and Thanksgi-  
ving, to him that sits upon the  
Throne, and to the Lamb for ever  
and ever.

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*FINIS.*